

# Smokey Bear to visit Delaware schools in October



Smokey Bear and Delaware Forest Service education specialist Ashley Peebles will once again be teaming up to bring Smokey's timeless message of fire safety and wildfire prevention to first-graders in the First State as part of National Fire Prevention Month in October.

Contact: Ashley Peebles, 302-698-4551 or [Ashley.Peebles@delaware.gov](mailto:Ashley.Peebles@delaware.gov)

[Smokey Bear](#) will be back in Delaware schools starting this October, visiting first-graders throughout the First State to remind children that “only you can prevent wildfires.” October is a time to highlight fire prevention and safety because the second week is [National Fire Prevention Week](#), observed annually in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

Under the guidance of [award-winning](#) trainer-educator Ashley Peebles, Smokey Bear has become one of the Delaware Forest Service’s most successful educational programs. In the past two years, the [Delaware Forest Service](#) (DFS) has provided an average of 90 Smokey Bear fire education programs per year to about 8,250 students – almost 75% of the first-graders in the entire state.

**\*\*\* SCHEDULE OF SMOKEY BEAR PROGRAMS BY COUNTY AND DATE (below) \*\*\***

[Nationwide fire data](#) continue to show that human activity causes the largest number of forest fires, which is why Smokey teaches children at a very early age that they should never play with fire or use matches. During a typical Smokey Bear program, first-graders learn about the many natural benefits that trees provide: oxygen, shade, wood products and wildlife habitat. Then, students learn about how harmful a fire can be to the forest. After discussing how a fire can start, students watch a video about how children playing who discover a box of matches are tempted to start a campfire. When the “real” Smokey finally appears on the scene, the children are asked to pledge to “not play with matches ever again.”

Every student receives a gift bag of complimentary Smokey Bear materials and school supplies. Many of the bags were assembled by senior citizen volunteers from the Modern Maturity Center in Dover’s RSVP Program. This year, volunteers put together more than 6,000 bags containing Smokey-themed comic books, wrist bands, rulers, pencils, and bookmarks.



Volunteers from the Dover Modern Maturity Center prepared more than 10,000 bags of Smokey Bear school supplies for schoolchildren.

Created in 1944, the Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention campaign is the longest-running public service advertising campaign in U.S. history, educating generations of Americans about their role in preventing wildfires. As one of the world's most recognizable characters, Smokey's image is protected by U.S. federal law and is administered by the [U.S. Forest Service](#), the [National Association of State Foresters](#) and the [Ad Council](#). Despite the campaign's success over the years, wildfire prevention remains one of the most critical issues affecting our country. Smokey's message is as relevant and urgent today as it was in 1944.



This 1944 poster marked the first time that the Smokey character appeared in a campaign to prevent wildfires. Smokey is now the longest-running and most successful public service campaign in U.S. history.

Smokey's original catchphrase was "Smokey Says – Care Will Prevent 9 out of 10 Forest Fires." In 1947, it became "Remember... Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires." In 2001, it was updated to its current version of "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires" in response to an outbreak of wildfires in natural areas other than forests and to clarify that Smokey is trying to prevent unwanted and unplanned outdoor fires versus prescribed fires.

**So how exactly did Smokey Bear become associated with wildfire prevention?**

The answer begins with World War II. On December 7, 1941,

Japanese planes attacked Pearl Harbor. The following spring, Japanese submarines surfaced near the coast of Santa Barbara, California, and fired shells that exploded on an oil field, very close to the Los Padres National Forest. Americans were shocked that the war had come directly to the American mainland. Fear grew that more attacks would bring a disastrous loss of life and destruction of property. There was also a fear that incendiary shells exploding in the forests of the Pacific Coast would ignite numerous raging wildfires.

With experienced firefighters and other able-bodied men deployed in the war, communities had to deal with wildfires as best they could. Protection of forests became a matter of national importance, and a new idea was born. If people could be urged to be more careful, perhaps some of the fires could be prevented. To rally Americans to this cause, and convince them that it would help win the war, the Forest Service organized the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention (CFFP) program with the help of the War Advertising Council and the Association of State Foresters. Together, they created posters and slogans, including "Forest Fires Aid the Enemy," and "Our Carelessness, Their Secret Weapon."

In a stroke of luck for the cause, in 1942, forests and their animal inhabitants were celebrated in Walt Disney's wildly popular motion picture, "Bambi." Disney allowed the CFFP program to use the film's characters on a 1944 poster. The "Bambi" poster was a success and proved the success of using an animal as a fire prevention symbol. However, Disney had only loaned the characters to the campaign for one year. The CFFP would need to find an animal symbol that would belong to them, and nothing seemed more fitting than the majestic, powerful (and also cute) bear.

On August 9, 1944, the creation of Smokey Bear was authorized by the Forest Service, and the first poster was delivered on October 10 by artist Albert Staehle. The poster depicted a bear pouring a bucket of water on a campfire. Smokey Bear soon

became popular, and his image began appearing on more posters and cards. By 1952, Smokey Bear began to attract commercial interest. An Act of Congress passed which removed Smokey from the public domain and placed him under the control of the Secretary of Agriculture. The Act provided for the use of collected royalties and fees for continued wildfire prevention education.

<b>2016 Delaware Forest Service Smokey Bear School Program</b> <b>(dates and times subject to change)</b>				
<b>New Castle County</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Phone #</b>
Bunker Hill Elem.	Oct. 4 – 9 a.m.	1070 Bunker Hill Rd.	Middletown	(302) 378-5135
Providence Creek Academy	Oct. 4 – 2 p.m.	355 W. Duck Creek Rd.	Clayton	(302) 653-6276
MOT Charter School	Oct. 5 – 1 p.m.	1156 Levels Rd.	Middletown	(302) 376-5125
Wilbur (Kathleen) Elem.	Oct. 5 – 10:30 a.m.	4050 Wrangle Hill Rd.	Bear	(302) 832-6330
Maclary (R. Elizabeth) Elem.	Oct. 7 – 8:30 a.m.	300 St. Regis Dr.	Newark	(302) 454-2142
Independence School	Oct. 10 – 10:15 a.m.	1300 Paper Mill Rd.	Newark	(302) 239-0330
Downes (John R.) Elem.	Oct. 10 – 2 p.m.	220 Casho Mill Rd.	Newark	(302) 454-2133
Harlan (David W.) Elem.	Oct. 11 – 2 p.m.	3601 Jefferson St.	Wilmington	(302) 762-7156
New Castle Elem.	Oct. 11 – 9:30 a.m.	903 Delaware St.	New Castle	(302) 429-4085
East Side Charter School	Oct. 12 – 12 p.m.	2401 Thatcher St.	Wilmington	(302) 421-8270
Cedar La. Elementary	Oct. 12 – 9:30 a.m.	1259 Cedar La. Rd.	Middletown	(302) 378-5045
Henry M. Brader Elem.	Oct. 13 – 2:30 p.m.	107 Four Seasons Pkwy.	Newark	(302) 454-5959
St. Peter's Cathedral School	Oct. 14 – 1:25 p.m.	310 West 6th St.	Wilmington	(302) 656-5234
Castle Hills Elementary	Oct. 14 – 10:45 a.m.	502 Moores Lake	New Castle	(302) 323-2915

North Star Elementary	Oct. 14 – 9:15 a.m.	1340 Little Baltimore Rd.	Hockessin	(302) 234-7200
St. Peter Catholic School	Oct. 17 – 1:30 p.m.	515 Harmony St.	New Castle	(302) 328-1191
Keene (William. B.)	Oct. 18 – 9:30 a.m.	200 LaGrange Ave.	Newark	(302) 454-2018
Sanford School	Oct. 19 – 12:30 p.m.	6900 Lancaster Pike	Hockessin	(302) 239-5263
Wilmington Manor Elem.	Oct. 20 – 10 a.m.	200 East Roosevelt Ave.	New Castle	(302) 323-2901
Oberle Elementary	Oct. 21 – 9:30 a.m.	500 Caledonia Way	Bear	(302) 690-1179
Brookside Elementary	Oct. 21 – 9:45 a.m.	800 Marrows Rd.	Newark	(302) 454-5454
Southern Elementary	Oct. 24 – 9:30 a.m.	795 Coxneck Rd.	New Castle	(302) 832-6300
Robert S. Gallaher Elem.	Oct. 25 – 2:45 p.m.	800 Brownleaf Rd.	Newark	(302) 454-2464
Caravel Academy	Oct. 25 – 8:30 a.m.	2801 Del Laws Rd.	Bear	(302) 834-8938
Thomas A. Edison Charter	Oct. 25 – 9:30 a.m.	2200 North Locust St.	Wilmington	(302) 778-1101
Tower Hill School	Oct. 26 – 1:30 p.m.	2813 West 17th St.	Wilmington	(302) 575-0550
Olive B. Loss Elementary	Oct. 27 – 2:30 p.m.	200 Brennan Blvd.	Bear	(302) 832-1343
Jones (Albert H. ) Elem.	Oct. 27 – 9:30 a.m.	35 West Main St.	Christiana	(302) 454-2131
Hanby (Brandywood) Elem.	Oct. 28 – 1:30 p.m.	2115 Anson Rd.	Wilmington	(302) 475-3966
Richardson Park Elementary	Oct. 28 – 11:20 a.m.	16 Idella Ave.	Wilmington	(302) 992-5570
Shortlidge (Evan G.) Elem.	Oct. 28 – 9:15 a.m.	100 West 18th St.	Wilmington	(302) 651-2710
Claymont Elementary	Nov. 1 – 10 a.m.	3401 Green St.	Claymont	(302) 792-3880
Carrcroft Elementary	Nov. 1 – 2 p.m.	503 Crest Rd.	Wilmington	(302) 762-7165
Brick Mill Elementary	Nov. 17 – 2:30 p.m.	378 Brick Mill Rd.	Middletown	(302) 378-5288

<b>Kent County</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Phone #</b>
Clayton Elementary	Oct. 6 – 1:45 p.m.	501 West Main St.	Clayton	(302) 653-8587
Lake Forest East Elem.	Oct. 7 – 2:25 p.m.	124 West Front St.	Frederica	(302) 335-5261
Milford Christian School	Oct. 11 – 10 a.m.	6062 Old Shawnee Rd.	Milford	(302) 422-4263
Fairview Elementary	Oct. 13 – 9 a.m.	700 Walker Rd.	Dover	(302) 672-1645
Smyrna Elementary	Oct. 13 – 9 a.m.	121 South School La.	Smyrna	(302) 653-8588
Lake Forest North Elem.	Oct. 14 – 12 p.m.	319 East Main St.	Felton	(302) 284-9611
Booker T. Washington Elem.	Oct. 17 – 1 p.m.	901 Forest Ave.	Dover	(302) 672-1900
Major George S. Welch Elem.	Oct. 20 – 1 p.m.	3100 Hawthorne Dr.	Dover	(302) 674-9080
South Dover	Oct. 20 at 9 a.m.	955 South State St.	Dover	(302) 672-1690
McIlvaine Early Childhood	Oct. 24 at 9:30 a.m.	11 Walnut St.	Magnolia	(302) 335-5039
North Dover Elementary	Oct. 26 – 2 p.m.	855 College Rd.	Dover	(302) 672-1980
Holy Cross Elementary	Oct. 28 – 1 p.m.	631 South State St.	Dover	(302) 674-5784
Towne Point	Nov. 10 – 10:15 a.m.	629 Buckson Dr.	Dover	(302) 672-1590
Lake Forest South Elementary	Nov. 10 – 2:15 p.m.	301 Dorman St.	Harrington	(302) 398-8011
<b>Sussex County</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Phone #</b>
H. O. Brittingham Elementary	Oct. 10 – 9 a.m.	400 Mulberry St.	Milton	(302) 684-8522
Greenwood Mennonite	Oct. 12 – 1 p.m.	12802 Mennonite Rd.	Greenwood	(302) 349-4131
North Georgetown Elementary	Oct. 13 at 1 p.m.	664 North Bedford St.	Georgetown	(302) 855-2430
Phillip C. Showell Elementary	Oct. 14 – 1:30 p.m.	41 Bethany Beach Rd.	Selbyville	(302) 436-1044
Paul Laurence Dunbar Elem.	Oct. 17 – 9:30 a.m.	499 West Sixth St.	Laurel	(302) 875-6140

Southern Del. School of Art	Oct. 20 – 12 p.m.	31 Hoosier St.	Selbyville	(302) 436-1066
West Seaford Elementary	Oct. 21 – 1:30 p.m.	511 Sussex Ave.	Seaford	(302) 628-4414
Woodbridge Elementary	Oct. 21 – 3 p.m.	P0 Box 2007	Greenwood	(302) 349-4010